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FLOOR DEBATE

February 11, 2002 LB 391

LB 391.

SENATOR JENSEN: Thank you, Mr. President. Members of the Legislature, in 1998, LB 1129 was passed by this body. It was a bill that I had introduced and it concerned itself with performance-based contracts. And it was a tool that was placed into the tool box of the school districts as a way to improve existing buildings, to achieve energy savings for the taxpayers that support those schools. It was not mandatory but only an option available to them. That bill, though not widely used, has allowed some school districts to make needed improvements and energy savings through a partnership between the energy contractor and the school district, and some districts have used this extensively and it has had good results. Now LB 391 is somewhat similar in that it becomes another tool to be placed into the school district's tool box that may be used for school construction and improvements. LB 391 creates the Nebraska Schools Construction Alternatives Act to authorize school districts to enter into a design-build construction program. LB 391 was first introduced February 22nd of 2001 before the Government, Military and Veterans Affairs Committee. It was advanced from that committee on a 7 to 1 vote. It was supported by the Nebraska Schools Construction Alternatives Association, Nebraska Council of School Administrators, Nebraska Association of School Boards, American Institute of Architects, and various other firms. There also was opponents to the bill. Since the advancement, there have been through the interim probably 12, 14 meetings with all representatives, many of those who had questions about the bill, some that had problems with the bill, and through that process we have been able to come up with a bill that has satisfied all of those who had objections and they have removed those objections. Through the amendment that will come after the committee amendment, those objections have been passed at this time...or have been accepted at this time. Well, what is a design-build concept? First of all, the current process for schools construction usually involves hiring an architect or an engineer to design the project with extensive drawings and specifications, requesting and reviewing construction bids, then contracting with the construction company to build. This is called the design-bid-build process. Then the design-build concept...which has been used in the